

## ADA Events

### ADA Skillset 2024 - Awareness and Development with Tim Calvert.

**Jan:** Customer Experience with Jonathan Nash from Sightlines  
29th Jan 14:00pm - 15.30pm

**Feb:** What to Charge: AD rates and Marketing with Anne Hornsby - 27th Feb from 14:00pm – 15.30pm

**March:** Screen and Stage - what to describe, what not to describe, with Veronika Hyks - 25th March 14:00pm – 15:30pm

Further sessions will be announced later this year.



### ADA's AD Soup Sessions with Roz Chalmers -

3rd Monday of each month:  
19.00pm - 20.00pm

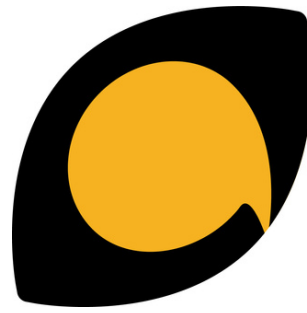
Monday 15th Jan - with Roz Chalmers

Monday 19th Feb - Creative Audio Introductions with Mo Pickering-Symes

Monday 25th Mar - TBC

Monday 15th Apr - Getting into screen description with Cara Edney

Soup volunteers for March required - please email [info@audiodescription.co.uk](mailto:info@audiodescription.co.uk) to volunteer.



# Audio Description Association

## A Warm Welcome

Hello ADA members!

As we say goodbye to the festive season 🎄🎁🎊🎉 and step into 2024, we're thrilled about the new opportunities and adventures ahead.

We're excited to announce the return of the ADA Newsletter! Here's a sneak peek at what's coming your way:

📅 **Quarterly Issues:** Get ready for regular updates and stories every quarter.

🌟 **The ADA Spotlight:** Exclusive interviews with standout ADA members.

📖 **Training and Workshops:** Sharpen your skills and expand your knowledge.

📰 **Relevant Industry News and Updates:** Stay informed with the latest industry news.

📺 **What's On:** Discover ADA's latest AD Live performances and TV viewing suggestions.

Get ready to join the ADA newsletter party! It's going to be a blast, and we can't wait to share it all with you.

## ADA Spotlight - Edward Copisarow - ADA's New Chairman.

🥁 Drumroll, please! 🥁 We're thrilled to kick off our first ADA Spotlight with Edward Copisarow. Interviewed by Tim Calvert, ADA's Vice Chair you can listen to the full interview on the *A View On Access Podcast*. Take it away Tim.....

**Tim:** Tell me about your background, the things that you have been involved in and your passions?

**Edward:** I'm 58 years old, I have retinitis pigmentosa, and I was diagnosed when I was 11.



I enjoyed going to the theatre as a teenager and young adult, and then gradually stopped as my eyesight got worse. I registered blind at the age of 21, and about 25 years ago, I discovered AD being offered in our venues. I started to go back to the theatre again and through that I developed my own feelings about how description worked and didn't work so well. So I found my way to ADA through that. Professionally, I started my career doing public policy work as a parliamentary aide and then went to Saatchi and Saatchi advertising.

From there I went into charities marketing for some large events. At the end of the 80s, I was working on the production of the Pink Floyd The Wall on the Potsdamer Platz when the Berlin Wall came down and as a big fundraiser for charity. And then I went to various charities, where I ran the marketing and communications and fundraising. Now I split my time between ADA and the Historic Buildings Charity in Buckinghamshire, the Amersham Society, which I chair, and three other organisations which I'm a trustee of. I also collect antique board games...



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## Industry Events:



### AUDIO DESCRIPTION INSTITUTES

Virtual Events

**April 8-12, 2024**  
and  
**September 9-13, 2024**

REGISTRATION FOR APRIL 2024 OPENS ON

**FEBRUARY 1st**  
Mark your calendars!

More info will be sent out in mid-Jan 2024.

## What's On

### TV:

**The Crown** - Series 6 - Netflix

**Alexander: The Making of a God** - Airing 31st Jan 2024 Netflix

**All the Light We Cannot See** - Netflix

**Slow Horses Series 1 - 3** - Apple TV

**Vigil - Series 1 and 2** - BBC iPlayer

**House Of Gucci** - BBC iPlayer

**Mr Bates Vs The Post Office** - ITV X



# Audio Description Association

## ADA Spotlight...

**Tim:** Can you talk a little bit about taking on the chair role and your vision for the next 12 months?

**Edward:** Neil Reading did a tremendous job of seeing ADA through COVID when theatre land closed down and he used the opportunity to create a website fit for the future, the old one was very cranky. And when I took over at the end of September, I felt that the key thing was to make sure that we had as many people working in description as possible being ADA members. Only by working together could we achieve some strength in making sure that the work was as good as it should be, and that we weren't constantly being forced to cut corners in order to match the lower prices being offered by people who weren't offering such a quality experience. Jo, followed by Trish have been doing a great job on getting the membership back up to pre COVID levels, and Oskar has been working on getting the website more functional.

There are zoom sessions, the AD Soup, which Roz will run from January to May, and you'll be doing your 90 min master class series on a specialist subject for people's continuing professional development. So we'll have some really great benefits for people who join ADA. They'll feel part of a supportive community committed to high professional standards. It can be clearly quite a lonely profession. A lot of it is done at home alone because not everybody gets to describe in pairs. And then from there, we need to be ready to launch the best training in a sustainable way.

ADA has been a major training provider in the past alongside other providers, but we need to make sure we've got agreed standards across the industry of what we're training people to do. Roz is leading the Live Performance Standard's team with Mo, while similarly, Veronika is leading our Screen AD team looking at how we work on standards for screen so that we can start to deliver training to those standards sometime in the autumn.

**Tim:** And lastly, can you talk about why you feel people should be a part of ADA and join as members?

**Edward:** I think that the benefits of membership are now much clearer, which is that you get to be part of the conversation about standards. There are online sessions which you can join in, delivered by hugely experienced people. There's a lot of interaction. Everybody can contribute to the discussion, share their experiences, and grow and benefit from that, and there are the newsletters about what's going on. We've got our directory so that anyone looking for a describer can search for a describer in a particular location or skill set, and we are the preeminent organisation in the UK for describers to belong. But by the end of this year, the reasons I hope will be even stronger, which is that we will be committing our membership to working to professional standards which we can all agree are the acceptable levels below which people shouldn't be describing. And it's a badge as well. I think people will be able to say proudly, I'm a member of ADA.

*To hear Edward's thoughts on the importance of ADA and why he wanted to join, you can listen to the complete interview in full on the A View On Access podcast at*

[www.audiodescription.co.uk/podcast](http://www.audiodescription.co.uk/podcast)



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## What's On Theatre:

### **The Witches - a musical adventure**

National Theatre in the Olivier  
Audio described: Sat 20th Jan  
Touch Tour at 12:00pm.  
Curtain up at 13.30pm  
Description by Andrew Holland  
and Roz Chalmers

### **Macbeth**

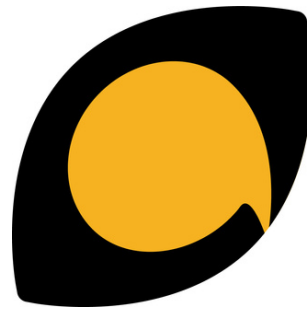
Donmar Holborn - ground  
breaking sound design through  
headphones  
Audio described: Sat 27th Jan  
Touch tour at 12:30pm  
Curtain Up at 14:30pm  
*\*waiting list only \**

### **Stranger Things: First Shadow**

Phoenix theatre - London  
Audio described: 10th Feb  
Touch tour at 13:00  
Curtain Up at 14:00  
Description by Vocal Eyes

### **Edward Scissor Hands Ballet from Matthew Bourne**

Birmingham Hippodrome  
Audio described: Sat 10th Feb  
Touch Tour at 13:30pm  
Curtain Up at 14:30  
Description by Caroline Burn



# Audio Description Association

## ADA's Training standards updates.

Following ADA's executive meeting in October 2023, trustees discussed the most pressing industry issues and how ADA could support its members.

The hot topic of training standards came to the forefront and we quickly dispatched Roz Chalmers and Mo Pickering-Symes to wrangle with the Stage standards, and Veronika Hyks and Cara Edney to lead the Screen AD working groups.

Check out their thoughts below as they begin to unpack this complex issue.

## Stage Standards:

Work is beginning to refresh ADA's long running training course Certificate in Audio Description in Theatre, building on the essential work done in the early years of ADA. Existing standards and assessment methods are being examined for their suitability in the current climate, where many theatre makers are exploring new ways to include blind and partially sighted audiences and creatives. The aim is to create a course that includes the fundamentals of audio description (including observation, editorial decision making, language, and vocal skills) that will leave the describer safe to practice in all but the most specialist areas such as ballet and contemporary dance, opera or circus. These skills can be offered as separate modules.



We are exploring the possibility of ADA endorsing individual tutors to run the course to the agreed standards, to encourage a broader distribution of the knowledge.

Allied to this is ADA's commitment to all parts of the audience's experience, from finding out about an upcoming audio described show, to booking it, to the way staff provide a welcome within the venue and to the technical considerations. Only 21% of UK theatres currently provide audio described performances. ADA aims to support others who may be floundering and need expert help.

*Roz Chalmers MBE - Artist Consultant and Audio Describer.*



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## What's On

### Theatre: *Continued*

#### Frameless interactive state of the art galleries

Marble Arch

Audio described 12th Feb at 13:30

View on access feature

<https://shorturl.at/xBXY1>

Description by Sightlines

#### Hamilton - Palace theatre

Manchester

Audio described: 13th Feb

Touch tour TBC

Curtain Up at 17:30

Description by Mind's Eye

#### My Neighbor Totoro (star pick)

The Barbican - London

Groundbreaking RSC

Production with puppetry

Audio described: 28th Feb

Touch tour at 17:00

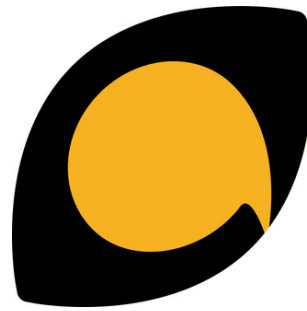
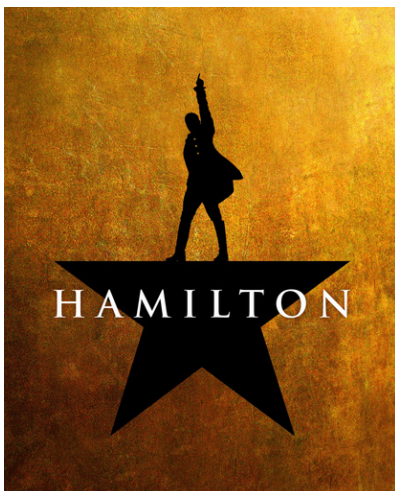
Curtain Up at 19:00

#### The Motive and The Cue

Noel Coward theatre

Audio described: 29th Feb at 19:30 and 16th Mar at 14:00

Touch tour TBC



# Audio Description Association

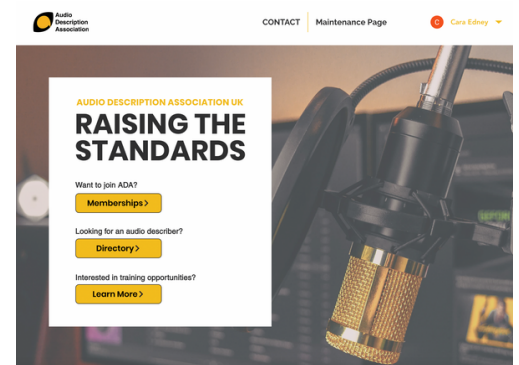
## Screen Standards:

To mark a brand new year, ADA is taking a fresh look at the principles of Screen AD, based on user and industry feedback and our members' requests. We will be compiling a set of standards based on key principles taken from the upcoming EBU Handbook for High-Quality Description on Screen to train beginners and active describers needing CPD. The course should cover everything you need to know: the golden rules of how to avoid annoying our audience (unfortunately, it happens quite a lot), repetition, irrelevant detail, overwriting, and bad phrasing, to name but a few. We shall be examining all the genres of screen content that you, as describers, are faced with: feature-length drama series or stand-alone episodes; documentary - political, historical and nature; short films: comedy, adult material, horror, children's programmes, reality, dance, animation and Live Screen AD.

Trainees who complete the modules to a satisfactory standard will receive ADA accreditation, which will stand you in good stead when you apply for AD jobs. If people don't meet those standards, which will be assessed by trained blind and partially sighted users, they will not be awarded accreditation. The hope is that, eventually, only accredited describers will be working in the industry.

We owe this to our listening audience and to ourselves to know that we are doing the best job we can. Details will be provided in our next newsletter, but please do not hesitate to contact us at [info@audiodescription.co.uk](mailto:info@audiodescription.co.uk) if you have any questions!

**Veronika Hyks** - Director of AD at Iyuno London, (formerly Head of AD at BTI Studios and IMS)



## ADA Website Update:

A quick update from Oskar White - one of ADA's newest and tech savviest trustees on the recent website developments.

*Following the brilliant work of Neil Reading, in migrating the website onto Wix.com I have been working to re-fresh the design and add some new features.*

*If you are a paid member of ADA, you'll now be able to add yourself to our directory and update your details whenever you like.*

*Behind the scenes, I've been working alongside Jenni, Trish and Andrew to smooth out the membership process and ensure everything's up to date.*

*Members will also be able to explore our 'Forum' and 'Resources' pages from late January too.*



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## Audio Description Resources

### A View On Access Podcast

Tim Calvert presents A View on Access, showcasing the best of accessible entertainment, arts and culture around the UK. This podcast offers a spotlight on audio description, venue access and general information that visually impaired audiences may find helpful.

[www.audiodescription.co.uk/podcast](http://www.audiodescription.co.uk/podcast)

## The ADA Board of Trustees

**Chair**  
Edward Copisarow

**Vice Chair**  
Tim Calvert

**Treasurer**  
Andrew Piper

**Secretary**  
Jenni Elbourne

**Membership Secretary**  
Trish Hodson

**Trustees**  
Paula Suchy  
Carolyn Smith  
Veronika Hyks  
Karen Limper-Herz  
Roz Chalmers  
Oskar White  
Cara Edney

Special mentions and thanks to Neil Reading who retired as Chair after 4 years sterling service. Jo Myers and Mo Pickering Symes have stepped down from their trustee roles to make way for new nominees but continue to be closely involved volunteering with ADA.



# Audio Description Association

## AD Soup Zoom Sessions -

Existing describers have already benefited from ADA's Zoom workshops and this will continue. After its inception in November, a series of one-hour discussions on a specific subject will continue in the new year. These are the AD Soups, so called because they rely on describers to add the ingredients to a basic recipe. The first was on giving effective feedback to a colleague, and handouts were provided to embed the knowledge that was shared. Upcoming sessions will take place monthly on Monday evenings 7pm - 8pm on Zoom.

The next will be on Monday 15th January, with others following on Monday 19th February, Monday 25th March, Monday 15th April and Monday 20th May.

Zoom log in links will be sent to ADA members before the sessions commence.

Members are encouraged to offer a subject they would like to deliver. Current possibilities include Continued Professional Development, describing lighting, scene sympathy, a return to diversity, and where else for audio description?



## ADA Needs You!!!



Calling all newsletter contributors! Our members know what's happening in our industry better than anyone else, and we want to hear what's important to you.

Drop us a line at [info@audiodescription.co.uk](mailto:info@audiodescription.co.uk)

What we need:

- Information about forthcoming audio-described TV shows, performances, or related events and workshops.
- Suggestions for newsletter stories and thought pieces that can enrich our readers' experiences.
- Volunteers to host AD Soup Sessions, where we can come together to share ideas and insights.

Your involvement can help us create a more inclusive and engaging platform for all.

 **Happy New Year !!** 

As we close out 2023, we want to extend our heartfelt gratitude to all of you for your unwavering support and involvement in ADA. Your dedication has been instrumental in our success, and we are truly grateful for your contributions. As we step into the new year, we wish you all a joyous and prosperous 2024. May it be filled with new opportunities, exciting challenges, and continued growth. Happy New Year to you and your loved ones!



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